

Message Text

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64

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

OMB-01 RSR-01 /081 W

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R 221010 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6154

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 7226

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MY, RP, ID

SUBJECT: TRIPARTITE TALKS ON SABAH

REF: A. MANILA 6389, B. MANILA 7005

1. IN CONVERSATION TODAY, FORMER AMBASSADOR AQUINO (REF A) PROFESSED NOT TO BE AWARE OF PUBLIC REFERENCES TO THE TRIPARTITE MEETING ON SABAH IN HONG KONG TWO WEEKS AGO. GIVEN SEEMINGLY UNIFTZM RELUCTANCE AMONG PARTICIPANTS TO DISCUSS THIS MEETING, IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT AP STORY (REF B) HAS NOT APPEARED IN THE CONTROLLED MANILA PRESS.

2. AQUINO SAID HE CONSIDERED IT " GOOD NEWS" THAT ALL PARTIES CONTINUE TO KEEP QUIET ABOUT THESE TALKS. IT IS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT A SECOND ROUND IS IN PROSPECT IN JULY. SENATOR ROY, ACCORDING TO AQUINO, IS URGING THAT IT BE HELD IN THE PHILIPPINES, PERHAPS IN BAGUIO (WHICH WE WERE READILY ABLE TO AGREE IS MUCH TOO PUBLIC) OR DAVAO. I SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD BE UNDERSTANDABLE IF IT PROVED EASIER TO AGREE ON A SITE

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NEITHER IN PHILIPPINES NOR IN MALAYSIA BUT, SHOULD ROY'S INITIATIVE PROSPER, IT SHOULD NOT BE HARD FOR GOP TO IDENTIFY SOME PRIVATE PLANTATION OR MINING SITE WHERE THE TALKS COULD BE RESUMED WITHOUT PUBLICITY.

3. PELAEZ IS STILL, OR AGAIN, IN MINDANAO, AND AQUINO CONFIRMED OUR IMPRESSION THAT HE WOULD PREFER FOR NOW TO AVOID CONFRONTING U. S. INQUIRIES ABOUT THE TALKS. AQUINO SAID, AS HE HAS PREVIOUSLY INTIMATED (E. G. MEMCON OF JUNE 1 TO EA/ PHL) THAT ONE REASON FOR CAUTION ON PART OF PELAEZ IS THE LIKELIHOOD THAT HE WILL REPLACE GENERAL ROMULO AS FOREIGN SECRETARY IF LATTER GOES THROUGH WITH PLAN TO RESIGN IN ORDER TO MARRY AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT BETH DAY.
HAMILTON

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 JUN 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: willialc
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973MANILA07226
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: MANILA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730626/aaaajkgw.tel
Line Count: 80
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 MANILA 6389, 73 MANILA 7005
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28-Aug-2001 by boyleja>; APPROVED <29-Aug-2001 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980219
Subject: TRIPARTITE TALKS ON SABAH
TAGS: PFOR, ID, MY, RP
To: BANGKOK
CANBERRA
EA
HONG KONG
JAKARTA
KUALA LUMPUR
SECSTATE WASHDC

SINGAPORE

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005